

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /010 R

DRAFTED BY:EA:EX:RSCARRITT

APPROVED BY:EA:EX:RSCARRITT

DESIRED DISTRIBUTION: EA/EX ONLY

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R 040629Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMBASSADOR JAMES HODGSON 10132 HILL GROVE DR
BEVERLY HILLS CALIFORNIA

UNCLAS STATE 192676

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: N/A

SUBJECT: N/A

FOR AMBASSADOR HODGSON FROM SCARRITT

AS YOU REQUESTED, I MADE THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE REPRESENTATIONS TO FBO ON THE QUESTION OF THE PAINTING OF THE PERIMETER WALL. YOUR EMBASSY STAFF HAS FAITHFULLY AUDITED ON MY PERFORMANCE AND PRESSED YOUR VIEWS AND CONCERNS. FBO HAS REACHED A DECISION, HOWEVER, AS REFLECTED BY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE WHICH WAS SENT TO TOKYO LAST NIGHT. IF YOU WISH TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER, YOU MAY WISH TO TELEPHONE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY O. CLEMMER RALSTON IN FBO (AREA CODE 703, 235-9491) OR HIS DEPUTY, PAUL SEREY (AREA CODE 703, 235-9493). YOU COULD MAKE THIS AS AN OFFICIAL TELEPHONE CALL CHARGEABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT BY CALLING LOCAL FTS OPERATOR, AND USING ACCESS CODE 32-DC-1909.

FOLLOWING IS STATE TELEGRAM 190991 DATED AUGUST 2, 1976. QUOTE

REF: (A) TOKYO 9983 (B) STATE 162125

1. IN REFTEL (B) THE DEPARTMENT DISAPPROVED THE REQUEST
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TO PAINT THE PERIMETER WALL A COLOR TO MATCH THE EXTERIOR

OF THE NEW CHANCERY. IN REFTEL (A) WE WERE INFORMED THAT THIS DECISION WAS NOT EASILY ACCEPTED BY THE EMBASSY WHICH SUGGESTED AN APPEAL TO FBO BY THE AMBASSADOR.

2. IN ORDER TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION, PERHAPS A MORE COMPLETE DISCUSSION OF OUR REASONS WILL FOSTER MORE UNDERSTANDING AS TO WHY WE MUST ABIDE BY OUR EARLIER DECISION NOT TO PAINT, OR REPAINT, THE PERIMETER WALL BROWN. THERE WERE SEVERAL PRINCIPAL REASONS INVOLVED IN DISAPPROVING THIS REQUEST.

3. THE FIRST REASON IS EASILY STATED AND IS BASED ON UNQUESTIONABLE LOGIC. AS GENERALLY HAPPENS WITH A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT OF THIS SIZE AND COMPLEXITY, THE FINAL CRESENDO RELTS IN A FEW MISMATCHED PIECES THAT REQUIRE REDESIGN AND CHANGE ORDERS IN THE CONTRACT TO COMPENSATE

FOR THE ADDITIONAL WORK INVOLVED IN MAKING EVERYTHING FIT. THE SPATE OF RECENT CHANGE ORDERS FOR THE NEW CHANCERY HAVE INCREASED THE FINISHING COSTS TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT WE MUST CAREFULLY HUSBAND OUR REMAINING FUNDS FOR ONLY THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO CREATE A COMPLETE AND FUNCTIONAL BUILDING. WE COULD NOT, IN GOOD CONSCIENCE, AUTHORIZE THE RATHER EXPENSIVE REPAINTING OF THE WALL WHEN THERE IS NO TECHNICAL CAUSE TO DO SO.

4. OUR SECOND REASON CARRIES JUST AS MUCH IMPORTANCE FOR US, BUT MAY BE SOMEWHAT MORE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN OR ACHIEVE AGREEMENT ON. THE WHITE WALL WAS SPECIFIED BY THE DESIGNING ARCHITECT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CHANCERY COMPOUND. IN THE MANY DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING ALL ASPECTS OF THE NEW CHANCERY DURING THE DESIGN PERIOD, THIS POINT OF TOTAL COLOR SCHEME WAS ENDORSED AND APPROVED BY FBO. WHITE WAS CHOSEN BECAUSE IT WILL BLEND MORE EASILY WITH THE SURROUNDING TERRAIN AND NOT FOCUS UNWANTED ATTENTION ON THE WALL. THE CHANCERY BUILDING IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE PREDOMINANT FOCUL POINT, AND PROLIFERATION OF THE SAME COLOR WOULD MAKE THE WALL COMPETITIVE FOR ATTENTION, WHICH IS NOT THE CONDITION WE WISH TO CREATE. THE DESIGN ALSO INCLUDES A COMPLETE SERIES OF PLANTINGS TO BE LOCATED IN

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FRONT OF THE WALL. IF THE WALL WERE PAINTED IN THE MATCHING COLOR, IT WOULD, AGAIN, DRAW AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION AND INTERFERE WITH THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PLANTINGS, WHEREAS A NEUTRAL WHITE WALL WILL FORM A MORE PERFECT BACKDROP FOR THE GREENERY TO GENTLY AND QUIETLY BRING THE LINE OF SIGHT TO THE PLANTINGS, AS INTENDED.

5. PRAGMATICALLY, THERE ARE ADDITIONAL DIFFICULTIES THAT WOULD DEVELOP HAD WE APPROVED THE REQUEST. THE PANELS OF THE NEW CHANCERY ARE FINISHED WITH A SPECIAL EPOXY BASED MATERIAL. THE COLOR AND TEXTURE IS DERIVED FROM THE NUMBER OF COATS AND APPLICATION TECHNIQUE OF THIS SPECIAL MATERIAL. ANY ATTEMPTS TO MATCH THE COLOR WITH ANOTHER PAINT MATERIAL WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE AND THE DIFFERENT COLOR TONES WOULD BE QUITE NOTICEABLE AS THE LIGHT CHANGES DURING PERIODS OF THE DAY. ALSO, DIFFERENT PAINT SUBSTANCES WILL DEGENERATE AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS, AND COLOR DIFFERENCES WOULD BE EXACERBATED WITH AGE. EVEN RESORTING TO THE SAME MATERIAL AS THE BUILDING ITSELF WOULD NOT BE SATISFACTORY. COLOR TONES VARY BETWEEN MANUFACTURERS BATCHES. A TEXTURED FINISH WOULD, AGAIN, TEND TO STRENGTHEN THE DESIGN STATEMENT OF THE WALL, A FEATURE WE HAVE ALREADY EXPLAINED OUR OPPOSITION TO.

6. THESE THEN ARE THE RATIONALE FOR DECIDING AGAINST THE REQUEST TO REPAINT THE WALL. THE FIRST IS FINANCIAL AND EASILY UNDERSTOOD. THE SECOND IS A MATTER OF PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT, BUT ONE WHICH ALL CONCERNED WITH THIS DESIGN AGREE WITH AND SUPPORT. THE THIRD IS TECHNICAL AND REPRESENTS A RANGE OF PROBLEMS INCOMENSURATE WITH THE INACTIVE NATURE OF THE WALL. FOR THESE REASONS OUR DECISION THAT THE WALL MUST REMAIN WHITE, AS PRESENTLY PAINTED, WILL HAVE TO STAND. HABIB UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE192676
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA:EX:RSCARRITT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760299-1297
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760887/aaaacyls.tel
Line Count: 141
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 76 TOKYO 9983, 76 STATE 162125
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <18 JAN 2005 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: N/A FOR AMBASSADOR HODGSON FROM SCARRITT AS YOU REQUESTED, I MADE THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE RE
TAGS: ABLD, JA
To: HODGSON JAMES
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006